

Hair Washing by Carerra_os

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Summary:

The boys taking care of one another

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Billy is confused but he just shrugs it off assumes Steve is getting lube as he strips and settles into the bath, the bubble at his waist as the water keeps filling, just an edge of too warm, the way Billy likes it and he settles against the lip of the tub feet pressed against the opposite edge. He is half drifting by the time Steve comes back in and he blinks his eyes at Steve's arms laden with things.

"What you got there walnut?" Billy asks slow and easy, Steve has not been gone that long but the hot bath is like a balm to Billy's sore limbs easing all the tension out of him.

"You'll see, brought you some water and your pills though." Steve waits until Billy lifts a hand and gives him the water, pressing the pills between Billy's lips to keep them from getting wet and starting to dissolve in his damp hands. Billy is quick to take a few sips with a

murmured thanks, watching lazily as Steve shuts the water off and sets down some bottles and a pitcher nearby.

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Billy has never really thought too much about bathing, much less hair washing as anything other than a necessity, it never occurred to him that two people might do that for one another when they are not trying to get laid. The only other time Billy knows people might bathe someone is when they are helping their kid, he has fond memories of bubble baths when his mom was still around, playing with a little plastic shark. No one has washed his hair since her, at least not while he was conscious, logical he knows someone must have been taking care of his hair while he was unconscious after Starcourt, someone had to get all that black gunk out of his curls but Billy never asked and no one volunteered the information.

So when Steve notices Billy having trouble reaching up in the height of winter, his scars pulling tight because of the cold and notices it does not look like Billy has washed his hair in a few days and suggests they bathe together Billy thinks Steve wants to fuck. He is a little thrown when Steve starts filling up the bathtub in the master bath but he is not opposed to all the nice smelling salts and the bubbles Steve dumps in. "Get in I'll be right back." Steve says giving Billy a soft kiss that just confuses him, usually when Steve is worked up and looking to get laid his kisses are more desperate.

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Billy just keeps watching Steve as he sits on the lip of the tub near Billy’s head and rolls his pants legs up until they rest at his knees. “You’re not getting in?” Billy asks frowning as Steve nudges him forward and Billy goes easy, too curious to put up a fight.

“Going to wash your hair.” Steve says simply, dipping the basin in the water pausing when he brings it up, cocking his head as he looks at Billy with a question “Is that alright? I noticed it’s been a few days and I know I don’t like it when my hair starts feeling greasy.”

“You don’t have to” Billy says quickly cheeks heating, he knows his hair is getting bad but the colder it gets in Hawkins the harder it is to raise his arms and any amount of time with them up even a little above shoulder high is tiring, leaves him worn out.

“I know I don’t have to, I want to.” Steve says earnestly, hand not holding the basin smoothing over Billy’s shoulders and he relaxes into the touch a little.

“Okay.” Still a little tense and unsure, he does not really know what he is expecting, no one has washed his hair since his mom and he barely remembers it, mostly he remembers the little blue spotted shark toy he used to move through the bubbles.

Steve hums and slides his hand up to Billy’s forehead and makes him tip his head back, smiling softly and Billy’s stomach is all fluttery as

Steve pours water at his hairline slowly, hand moving to block any for splashing into Billy's eyes. The gentle care is nice, Steve fills the pitcher three times making sure all of Billy's hair is nice and wet before letting the pitcher rest on the side of the tub near the wall where there is room and picking up a bottle.

Billy recognizes the scent instantly, would know it anywhere from hours pressed close to Steve, curled up with him each night in bed, from lazy evenings on the couch when Billy reads and Steve tucks his head under his chin and asks him to do it out loud, always falling asleep before Billy can get through more than one chapter. Billy tips his head back a little more, wet hair resting against Steve's knees, water soaking into the fabric of his rolled up pants as Billy watches Steve work the shampoo between his hands into a lather.

Billy only stops watching Steve's fingers disappear under suds when Steve urges him to move up a little and then Steve's fingers are in his hair, working against his scalp and Billy is melting. He always likes Steve's fingers in his hair and this is just as good, maybe better with the way Steve meticulously massages his scalp. Billy's head lolls forward and Steve's hands just follow him, thumbs working at the base of his skull, behind his ears, working it all into a big fluffy lather.

Billy is a little disappointed when those hands are pulled back and Steve picks up the pitcher again, taking just as much care when he rinses the soap out as he had before. "Do you want a second shampoo? Just to make sure your hair is nice and clean?" Steve asks voice soft and Billy does, if only to get those hands back, he nods and Steve does it for him all over again, maybe taking a little more time to rub at Billy scalp until Billy is just a lax puddle resisting against him again.

It is all so nice in a way Billy never expected, bathing was always a necessity, a means to an end but here with Steve working conditioner into his longer strands humming some song Billy barely likes under his breath, it feels like a luxury. It makes that fluttery feeling in his

stomach kick up again as he looks to the right where he can see them in the big mirror hanging against the wall, it makes him feel cared for in a way he has not in a very long time as he watches Steve concentrate on his hair.

Billy just lets himself rest against Steve's knees again when he leaves the conditioner to sit, feeling nothing but benign pleasure as Steve grabs a washcloth and soaps it up dragging it over his skin. Billy drifts, is half asleep by the time he is all cleaned and his hair is rinsed out, lets Steve bundle him up in towels, one around his hair another around his waist, lets Steve put a fluffy robe around him when he shivers.

Steve breaks out the blow dryer murmuring about not going to bed with wet hair, combs through Billy's locks with a wide tooth comb and rubs some fancy product into Billy's hair all while he watches through content tired eyes. Even the sound of the blow-dry is not enough to pull him toward more alertness, the heat is nice and the gentle way Steve pulls the brush through his hair working on drying one section at a time.

Billy is barely conscious by the time Steve tucks him into bed, leaving him naked and piling extra blankets on when Billy refuses to even attempt putting on clothes, tossing them away with a slurred "Don't need them, got you to keep me warm walnut." Billy cannot remember the last time he was this relaxed, the last time he was not a tense ball struggling to fall asleep. There is no struggle tonight, sleep taking him as soon as Steve is spooned up behind him, hot breath ghosting across his neck where Steve presses a soft kiss.

After that it becomes a thing, Steve washing Billy's hair for him every couple of days usually in a bath full of soaks, water filled higher once Steve gets Billy's hair washed letting Billy soak and soothe his muscles. Sometimes Steve will get in after he has washed Billy's hair, get between Billy and the back of the tub and let Billy use him as a pillow but on the bad days Steve just waits until Billy is lax and gets

him out, getting him into bed before the effects of the bath can wear off, allowing Billy a full nights rest on the coldest nights.

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Steve on the other hand will not let Billy wash his hair unless he is really sick, they tried it *once* .

Billy had wanted to return the favor, wanted Steve to feel just as taken care of as he had but he got a little distracted. Billy had seen the way the soap lather made Steve's hair stand up and had not been able to help himself from making fohawks and little spikes and anything he could think of out of Steve's hair. Steve had indulged him as long as could stand before he got frustrated and pouty and took over, refusing to let Billy try again, sure he just wanted to play and yeah that is definitely half of the reason Billy offers to try again.

When Steve gets sick though, really sick Billy washes his hair for him, no messing about. Out of the two of them you would think Billy would be the one getting sick easy, given the damage the mind flyer did but Steve is the one who always ends up getting sick. Sinus infections in the spring, the flu any time one of the kids get it because he is always giving them rides and literally anything that is going around Steve manages to catch from working at Family Video when the moms bring their sick snotty nosed kids in to get movies to keep them entertained. Steve always worries when he brings something home, fussing up a storm and stressing, making himself worse but Billy got a whole slew of top secret drugs tested on him when the government was working to save him and one of the side effects is he is very rarely affected by any of the common shit that affects everyone else.

So Steve gets real sick, too sick to even think about moving and he gets extra whiny, he hates feeling greasy and gross and Billy tosses the blanket off of Steve each day, ignoring his complaints and scoops him up. The shower is already on steam fogging the mirror, Billy knows better than to try getting him into a bath Steve refuses to sit in

his own “ *sick soup*. ” Billy settles them in the bottom of the shower, sits behind him, boxing him in and keeping him from just lying down and curling up in a ball under the spray.

Billy makes him lean his head out of the spray and suds him up real good fingers working at Steve’s scalp as his head lulls before standing, keeping Steve resting against his legs as he grabs the handheld shower head. Billy settles back down, one hand against Steve’s forehead protecting his eyes, the other rinsing the soap from his hair. Billy does not shampoo Steve twice, not when he is sick, he is just going to have to wash his hair again tomorrow and he knows Steve only shampoos twice when he goes a few days in between.

Billy washes Steve with the same care he shows him, lets him lean against him as he does it, Steve being absolutely no help in this state, just muttering complaints any time Billy moves him so he can make sure to get Steve clean everywhere.

Despite his complaints and his refusal to help, Steve goes all soft and sweet after Billy gets him dressed and in bed, always feeling better once he is clean and the steam helps him breathe again. All soft “Thank you sunflower” and half asleep kisses against Billy’s jaw that has that fluttery feeling in his chest again as Steve twists onto his other side, dragging Billy’s arm around his waist and twining their fingers. Billy drops his own kiss to the back of Steve’s neck, glad he is now comfortable enough to get some rest, that he was able to provide that for him.

Author's Note:

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